

## **IN THE ABSTRACT**

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A method of launching a catapult, a catapult and a locking device for a catapult. The catapult comprises a carriage (4) for fastening an aircraft (5). The carriage (4) can be provided with a high acceleration by directing a launching force ( $F_1$ ) generated by a launching device thereto. The carriage (4) can be held at a launching position (6) by means of the locking device (9). The catapult further comprises a takeoff damper (34) that generates a damping force ( $F_2$ ) having a direction opposite relative to the launching force. Accordingly, the takeoff damper (34) restricts the acceleration of the carriage (4) at the initial launching moments.

(Figure 4)